

Application No: 22/1381N

Location: Corner Of Edleston Road and Brook Street, Crewe

Proposal: Four storey block including 11 apartments and associated parking and access arrangements (re-submission of 20/0829N)

Applicant: Mr Matt Peddle, Premier Living Homes Ltd

Expiry Date: 31-May-2022

### **SUMMARY**

The application site lies entirely within the Crewe Settlement Boundary as determined by the Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan.

The development is for the erection of a residential apartment building in an area characterised by a mixture of uses (including residential).

The proposed development is appropriate to the character of its locality in terms of the principle and the overall design. The development would not have a detrimental impact upon neighbouring amenity, local heritage, ecology, highway safety or trees.

The proposed development involves a contemporary design solution that will not detract from the nearby locally listed building.

This is a brownfield site and the proposal will provide housing in a sustainable location, easily accessed by public transport, within walking distance of the Town Centre, and not reliant on the private car. It will provide in-town living that will help support the local economy. These factors are considered to outweigh the objections that have been raised against the development.

Overall, the proposal development meets the criteria of the relevant policies of the Development Plan and is considered acceptable. In the light of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it is recommended that planning permission should be granted.

### **SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

Approve with conditions

## **REASON FOR DEFERRAL**

The application was deferred at the Southern Planning Committee meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2022 to allow members to conduct a site visit.

## **REASON FOR REFERRAL**

The application is to be determined by planning committee by Councillor Hogben for the following reasons:

- *Out of keeping with character and appearance of the existing street scene, given the over-dominant nature of the proposed building.*
- *Unsafe access to the building for future residents, contrary to Policy SE1 of Local Plan.*
- *Poor living conditions for future residents - inadequate living space. None of the proposed apartments meet Technical Housing Standards. While these have not yet been formally adopted by the council, it has been stated that those standards will be required and adopted when the Local Plan is reviewed or revised. In the meantime, this means the proposed accommodation would be detrimental to the living conditions of future occupants and thus contrary to national policy.*
- *The application represents poor design that needs to be improved to better fit in with the street scene on this prominent corner plot.*
- *Provision for vehicle parking for this development is inadequate. This seems to be usual for this kind of application in Edleston Road, which is already overloaded with HMOs.*
- *Waste management arrangements and access to waste bins are inadequate.*
- *Loss of amenity for Brook Street residents.*
- *Lack of detail on bicycle storage arrangements.*
- *This is a resubmission of to planning application 20/0829N, which was approved by an officer in February 2022. Following judicial review that approval was quashed by the High Court on 12th April because the council failed to consult on the significant changes made to the original application in December 2021. In the interests of openness and in the wider public interest, it is important the council ensures an objective and separate assessment of the application is made by elected councillors in public.*

## **DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT**

The application site comprises an area of vacant land comprising hardstanding on the corner of Edleston Road and Brook Street. At the time of the planning officer's site visit there was 1 single garage unit present. The site is accessed via Brook Street and is located within the Crewe Settlement Boundary as well as the Nantwich Road area houses in multiple occupation article 4 direction zone.

The area is characterised by a mixture of uses including residential, retail and commercial. There is a locally listed building opposite (Temple Chambers).

## **DETAILS OF PROPOSAL**

This is a full application for erection of a four-storey block including 11 apartments and associated parking and access arrangements (re-submission of 20/0829N).

Since the deferral of the application a revised ground floor plan has been provided. This plan shows that one car-parking space which it was not possible to access has been removed from the scheme. The cycle and bin storage areas have been repositioned (the bin storage area has also been increased in size). This plan has been sent to Crewe Town Council to see if they wish to make any revised comments.

## **RELEVANT HISTORY**

20/0829N - Construction of a four-storey block including 11 apartments and associated parking and access arrangements – decision quashed

## **POLICIES**

### **Local Plan Policy**

#### **Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) (Adopted)**

MP 1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development, PG 1 - Overall Development Strategy, PG 2 – Settlement Hierarchy, SD 2 - Sustainable Development Principles, SE 1 – Design, SE 2 - Efficient Use of Land, CO 1 - Sustainable Travel and Transport, CO 1 - Sustainable Travel and Transport, IN 1 – Infrastructure, IN 2 - Developer Contributions

Parking Standards at Appendix C

#### **Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011 (CNLP) (Saved Policies)**

BE.1 – Amenity, BE.3 - Access and Parking, BE.4 – Drainage, Utilities and Resources

### **No Neighbourhood Plan**

### **National Policy**

#### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

### **CONSULTATIONS (Summary)**

**Nature Conservation (Ecology):** No objection subject to conditions

**Environmental Health:** No objection subject to conditions

**Design:** No objection subject to conditions

**United Utilities:** General advice and drainage condition suggested.

**Conservation (Built Heritage):** No objection subject to conditions

**Highways:** No objection (this is based on the revised plans showing 3 parking spaces)

### **VIEWS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL:**

Crewe Town Council –objects to the original proposal on the basis that:

- i. Design is not in keeping with the area
- ii. Impact on heritage setting of the site
- iii. Lack of waste bin storage
- iv. Loss of amenity for nearby residents
- v. Inadequate bicycle storage
- vi. Substandard parking and highway safety issues
- vii. Substandard living accommodation for future residents due to room sizes being below minimum standard
- viii. Conditions required relating to detailing, fenestration and materials should be imposed to minimise any impact on the non-designated heritage asset

### **OTHER REPRESENTATIONS:**

One letter of objection has been received from a resident of Crewe which is summarised below;

- Safety concerns for future occupiers due to an unlit gap between buildings
- Inadequate room sizes and impact on future amenity of occupiers
- Poor unit mix

### **Supporting Information**

Planning, Design and Access and Heritage Statement  
Contamination Land Site Check

### **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

#### **Principle of Development**

Policy PG 2 (Settlement Hierarchy) of the CELPS identifies Crewe as a principal town where significant development will be encouraged to support their revitalisation, recognising their roles as the most important settlements in the borough. Development will maximise the use of existing infrastructure and resources to allow jobs, homes and other facilities to be located close to each other and accessible by public transport.

The development is for the erection of a residential apartment building in an area characterised by a mixture of uses (including residential). The principle of the development is considered acceptable subject to compliance with the other relevant policies.

#### **Affordable Housing**

The development does not trigger the requirement for affordable housing provision.

## Design

Policy SE1 (Design) of the CELPS sets out that development should contribute positively to the area. During the planning application extensive discussions have taken place regarding the design of the building as proposed to ensure that the scheme integrates into the existing, surrounding area in design terms.

The scheme is essentially a storey higher than the terraced buildings adjacent and the Temple Chambers on the opposite side of Edleston Road, albeit the street elevations submitted show the overall building height to be comparable. This site reads as a distinct plot and therefore this additional storey arrangement both reflects modern requirements in terms of floor to ceiling heights and the impact that has on the height of individual storeys, but also is able to be accommodated without undermining the general character of the area. The design officer is of the view that the proposal is appropriate in its general design approach. It is recognised that, in terms of overall scale and massing, the proposal would benefit from the reduction of a storey on the Brook Street frontage, which would then allow the building to further step and create the opportunity of a roof garden. However, that option is not available for consideration and this proposal must be assessed on its own merits, which is overall considered acceptable in terms of design.

The building has been designed as a modern addition to the streetscene, taking design cues from the surrounding, traditional existing buildings. In terms of the elevation facing Edleston Road, the height of the proposed building will not exceed the neighbouring building to the south. The corner of Brook Street and Edleston Road is characterised by a corner tower which adds an interesting feature to this prominent site/building. The elevation facing Brook Street has been design so the highest part of the building is the corner tower, and the building then staggers utilising the existing topography of Brook Street and to add an interesting and more dynamic elevation that shall integrate into the existing street scene. This elevation features large areas of glass and a green wall and a feature glazed entrance.

Adjacent to the site, is a short terrace of attractive 2 and a half storey town houses. Notwithstanding, the site reads as a distinct plot (partly due to topography) and consequently it is appropriate for the scheme to introduce an 'of today' design, despite the more traditional townscape in the area, provided the quality is deemed sufficiently high. The scheme seeks to reference elements of more traditional form on the Edleston Road elevation with the corner emphasised and return elevation of a more contemporary design, including full height glazed openings and balconies. The predominance of brick in its construction will also further anchor the design. This approach is considered valid, helping to reflect but also differentiate this as new development from the more traditional townscape opposite and adjacent. Consequently, subject to the appropriate materials and detailing palette being employed (including clarification/refinement of key elements of detailing) it is considered that this proposal is appropriate in its general design approach.

The rear elevations are more functional in design terms, and this is considered to be acceptable given the appropriate design or the more important, corner elevations. In layout terms, the elevations fronting Edleston Road and Brook Street follow the existing

building line and this is acceptable. The building will occupy a 'L' shape fronting the two roads with a courtyard area to the rear.

The design officer has advised that the bin storage could have been designed in more effectively and that it is unfortunate that no private space has been designed into the scheme, despite this being advocated by earlier design advice in terms of inclusion of a roof terrace and shared use/greening of the courtyard. No landscape information has been submitted. This would be conditioned should the application be approved. It is also considered that the lack of a roof terrace/amenity space is acceptable in this instance given the proximity to the town centre and that it is recognised that occupiers may not require external amenity space in this area.

The scale and massing of the proposed development is considered acceptable and the impact on the streetscene would not be significant. It is considered that, subject to conditions, the proposed development is acceptable in design terms. The proposed openings are considered to be in keeping with the character of the area and are acceptable in design terms, subject to conditions. Limited information has been provided with regard to the materials and fenestration detail and it is considered necessary to impose a condition requiring the prior approval of the external materials prior the development starting.

### **Impact on Locally Listed Building**

The site forms a prominent corner plot opposite a locally listed building. The locally listed building (Temple Chambers) is a distinctive brick late Victorian building with terracotta detailing to the windows, doors finials and copings with kneelers. It has a canted entrance with a first-floor bay window above, both with terracotta detailing. Above this the building has distinctive dormers topped with terracotta copings and 3 finials each. It is currently divided into flats.

There is no objection to the principle of a building of that size on this site. However, the design and materials need to be such that the building will not jar or be at odds with the heritage asset opposite it. For the most part the row of terraces adjacent to the site will restrict views of the site from the south. From the north the site is in a quite dominant location and will be viewed in conjunction with the locally listed building, bearing this in mind, the north and west elevations are particularly important. The proposed building will not sit above the building height of the neighbouring properties, although an extra floor has been inserted and has been designed with some consideration to the local character with dormers and a projecting corner detail. The ability of the elevations mentioned above to compliment, the existing street-scene will, in part, come down to the quality of the detailing, fenestration and materials. No objections are raised by the conservation officer subject to conditions to ensure north and west facades are appropriately detailed.

### **Amenity**

Policy BE.1 (Amenity) of the Local Plan advises that new development should not be permitted if it is deemed to have a detrimental impact upon neighbouring amenity in terms of overlooking, visual intrusion or noise and disturbance. Furthermore, the level of private amenity space and the separation distances are a material consideration as

detailed within the Supplementary Planning Document on Development on Backland and Gardens (The SPD). The SPD sets out that as a general indication, there should ideally be a distance of 21m between principal elevations, 13.5 m between a principal elevation with windows to habitable rooms and blank elevation and that each application will be judged on its own merits dependent upon the character of the site involved.

It should also be noted that the recently adopted Cheshire East Design Guide SPD also includes reference to separation distances and states that separation distances should be seen as a guide rather than a hard and fast rule.

Figure 11:13 of the Design Guide identifies the following separation distances;

- 21 metres for typical rear separation distance
- 18 metres for typical frontage separation distance
- 12 metres for reduced frontage separation distance (minimum)

It is considered that the proposed development would not have any significant adverse impact on the residential amenity of any neighbouring property in these terms. The relationship between the existing buildings on the east side of Edleston Road and the buildings opposite is established and the proposed building will follow this pattern of existing development. With regards to the building to the south (No. 205) there are no side facing windows within this elevation and no windows are proposed in the side elevation immediately to the north of No. 205. It is noted that there are windows in the rear elevation of No. 205 however at the time of the planning officer's site visit (and confirmed by looking at the planning history of the building) the use is a dentist use and the rear windows serve surgery/dentist rooms. As such it is considered that this proposed relationship is acceptable.

With regards to the existing dwellings to the east, there are no side facing windows in the side elevation of the nearest dwelling. The proposed building elevation featuring windows would be approximately 27m from the dwellings to the east and this is in accordance with the standards as above. The elevations nearest the existing dwellings do not include any openings. To the north lies a car wash/valeting use and it is not considered that the impact on the amenity afforded to the occupiers of the site will be significant.

It is noted that the letters of objection raise the issue of minimum room size requirements. The applicant has advised that the apartments are all 1 bed 1 person units. The architect has indicated on the submitted floor plans that each of the apartments is of sufficient size to accommodate a double bed should the occupant prefer to sleep in a double than a single bed. The Nationally Described Space Standards require a minimum gross internal floor area of 39 square metres for a 1 bedroom 1 person apartment, but this is reduced to 37 square metres where the apartment has a shower rather than a bath installed (as is the case with each of the 11 apartments comprising the submitted scheme). The Gross Internal Floor Area (GIFA) of each of the 11 apartments is set out on page 16 of the Supporting Statement submitted with the application (repeated below), and in every case the GIFA exceeds both the 37 square metre and the 39 square metre standard.

Ground Floor	Flat 1	41.1m <sup>2</sup>
	Flat 2	40.8m <sup>2</sup>
First Floor	Flat 3	43.7m <sup>2</sup>
	Flat 4	41.8m <sup>2</sup>
Second Floor	Flat 5	42.3m <sup>2</sup>
	Flat 6	43.7m <sup>2</sup>
Third Floor	Flat 7	41.8m <sup>2</sup>
	Flat 8	42.3m <sup>2</sup>
	Flat 9	42.36m <sup>2</sup>
	Flat 10	39.32m <sup>2</sup>
	Flat 11	42.3m <sup>2</sup>

Environmental Protection raise no objection to the scheme subject to conditions.

### **Parking and Access**

The proposal is for 11 one bed apartments with off-road parking with a new access off Brook Street. In terms of the sustainability of the site location, the site is a short walk from the centre of Crewe, Crewe train station, the Lockitt Street retail development and frequent public transport services and is considered to be in a sustainable location with suitable connections to the surrounding areas.

A new access into the site is proposed off Brook Street. The access will only be single car width but given the limited scale of development and that the access is off a minor residential street that will have low traffic speeds, this is considered acceptable. The access will have sufficient visibility.

Three car parking spaces are proposed which is below CEC typical requirement of 1 space per apartment. CEC parking standards and national guidance also allow for flexibility within sustainable locations, and given this site is in a highly sustainable location the parking provision is considered to be acceptable.

12 cycle parking spaces will also be provided with a covered and secure location.

No objections are raised by the council's highway officer. The sustainability credentials of an in-town living scheme with access to local services without the reliance of provide car use is a significant material consideration in favour of the development.

### **Ecology**

The council's ecologist has advised that there are no objections to the proposed scheme subject to conditions.

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

United Utilities have advised that there are no objections to the development subject to a condition relating to the drainage of the site. The suggested condition will be imposed should the application be approved.

### **Local economy and housing**

The site lies approximately 500 metres south of Crewe Town Square. The development will provide housing on a brownfield site and will support objectives of providing in-town living which in turn has the benefit of supporting the local economy as future residents use and support local services and businesses. The proposal is therefore in general alignment with regeneration strategies for Crewe Town Centre. This is considered to be a material consideration in favour of the development.

### **Other Matters**

The contents of the objections raised are noted and these matters have been considered within the relevant sections of this report.

There are no trees which are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order or any other notable trees that would be impacted by the development.

In terms of refuse storage and collection, the proposed site plan has been revised. This shows a bin storage area measuring 12.5sqm. Guidance from ANSA on the Councils website shows that the development will require one 1,100 litre Eurobin for general waste for recycling for every 5 residences and one 1,100 litre Eurobin for recycling for every 5 residences. In this case all units would have one bedroom and be occupied by single person households. Although 11 residences would be provided the refuse generated is likely to be significantly less as part of this development and as a result bin storage of 4 Eurobins is considered to be acceptable to serve the development.

ANSA guidance requires the bin store to be at least 250% of the total container footprint. Four Eurobins would have a footprint of 5sqm and the size of the bin store is 250% of the total container footprint. The development is considered to be acceptable in terms of the bin storage provision.

### **CONCLUSIONS AND REASON(S) FOR THE DECISION**

The application site lies entirely within the Crewe Settlement Boundary as determined by the Crewe and Nantwich Local Plan.

The development is for the erection of a residential apartment building in an area characterised by a mixture of uses (including residential).

The proposed development is appropriate to the character of its locality in terms of the principle and the overall design. The development would not have a detrimental impact upon neighbouring amenity, local heritage, ecology, highway safety or trees.

The proposed development involves a contemporary design solution that will not detract from the nearby locally listed building.

This is a brownfield site and the proposal will provide housing in a sustainable location, easily accessed by public transport and not reliant on the private car. It will provide in-town living that will help support the local economy. These factors are considered to outweigh the objections that have been raised against the development.

Overall, the proposal development meets the criteria of the relevant policies of the Development Plan and is considered acceptable. In the light of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it is recommended that planning permission should be granted.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **APPROVE subject to conditions**

- 1. Time (Standard)**
- 2. Approved Plans**
- 3. Boundary treatment to be submitted and approved**
- 4. Dust management plan to be submitted and approved**
- 5. Drainage to be submitted and approved**
- 6. EVC provision**
- 7. Piling to be submitted and approved**
- 8. Sustainable travel pack to be submitted and approved**
- 9. Land contamination to be submitted and approved**
- 10. Nesting birds – timing of works**
- 11. Ecological enhancement to be submitted and approved**
- 12. Landscape including living wall and planter (details) to be submitted and approved**
- 13. Landscape (implementation)**
- 14. Final design and detail of all fenestration to be submitted and approved**
- 15. Samples of facing and roofing materials to be submitted and approved**
- 16. Details of all feature brickwork detailing to be submitted and approved**
- 17. Details of parapet/coping, balconies and design of Edleston Road entrance to be submitted and approved**
- 18. Detail of feature glazed entrance/walling onto Brook Street to be submitted and approved**
- 19. Details of entrances and gate design to be submitted and approved**
- 20. Levels to be submitted and approved**
- 21. Details of bin storage**

**In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Head of Planning has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the**

**Chair of the Southern Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.**

